

## Curricular Practical Training (CPT) Guidelines

Graduate students in Arts and Sciences who meet the USCIS eligibility criteria may apply for academic credit for the purposes of F-1 curricular practical training (CPT). In order to be eligible for CPT, you must have already completed one academic year (September to May) of course work, full-time at Penn, but have not completed all of your degree requirements. (Note: A student beginning their program in January would be able to register for CPT after a second term of full-time study.) Masters students must finish at least 6 course units, and meet academic standards before they are allowed to register for any CPT course. Doctoral students must complete all coursework before requesting CPT during the fall or spring semesters.

If you have any questions regarding the CPT immigration status requirements, please email your ISSS advisor (listed on the iPenn page when you log in). Questions on the academic side for Graduate Arts and Sciences can be directed to your program coordinator and/or Graduate Division (if your program cannot answer it).

### Procedure/steps (to be completed in order):

1. Obtain an offer letter from an employer that will verify the work you will do. The number of hours you will be working, the start and end date of the employment, and the internship location (onsite physical address or stating remote) must also be listed in the letter. The start date must start on or after the term begins, and the end date must end prior to the start of the next term. (Example: Summer internships must start after the last day of the Spring term and must end before the first day of the Fall term.)

Talk with your program coordinator about CPT at this point, as many will guide you through this process.

2. Identify a faculty member who will serve as your CPT Supervisor. Your supervisor's area of work and specialization should substantially overlap with your proposed internship work.

**Master's students:** In most cases, the supervisor is your graduate chair. Once you receive the supervisor's approval and signature, you can send to your program coordinator to forward to the Graduate Division for processing.

**PhD students:** Typically, the supervisor is your advisor. Upon receiving your advisor/supervisor's signature, please forward to your program coordinator for assistance in obtaining your grad chair's signature. They will forward on to the Graduate Division for processing.

3. Send the Arts and Sciences application CPT Form, employer's offer letter, and your proposal to the supervisor, all as one .pdf file. Please copy your program coordinator for their review.

The proposal (2 pages maximum) must include the following: Describe the tasks you will undertake, providing details of the content of your position/internship and how it relates to your degree program; how the employment is an integral part of your studies; list courses you've taken as a graduate student and how the position/internship will provide valuable hands-on experience in conjunction with these courses; state that you will submit the Mid-Point and Final Progress Reports (details on the report below).

4. If your supervisor is different from your graduate chair, upon receipt of your approved and signed documents by your supervisor, please send the document to your program coordinator to ask for help in getting the graduate chair's signature. They will assist with this step or let you know how you can easily obtain it.

5. Graduate Groups should submit the final signed document to the Graduate Division Office after the graduate chair reviews and signs. If your program returns the CPT documents to you directly, please submit the CPT Application Form, offer letter, and proposal to your program coordinator for final review. It will then be sent to Graduate Division for school processing. Please allow 5-7 business days for the Graduate Division's review of all documents. If anything further is needed you will be informed. Upon final approval as indicated above from GSAS, you will be registered for course credit during the term of the CPT. Students will be registered for GAS 9980.

6. Once step #5 is complete, you will receive an email to verify the approval with the next steps you will need for requesting CPT online through [International Student and Scholar Services](#) using the online [F-1 Curricular Practical Training Form](#). Do NOT complete this step until given approval by GSAS via email. Processing time by ISSS is typically up to 5 business days. **Students cannot begin any work until they have received the CPT authorization from ISSS.**

7. **PhD students** are required to alert your business office of internships for stipend reasons.

### **Additional Information**

**Processing delays:** The CPT process can take up to two weeks for processing during the busiest times. Multiple offices and staff are reviewing your CPT at different stages. If all

documents are in order sometimes it can take as little as five business days for processing. Please plan accordingly and give yourself at least a two-week window prior to your start date to get all documents in and reviewed/approved on time.

**Evaluation and grading:** All CPT course registrations (GAS 9980) will be issued either an “S” grade or a “U” grade. No letter grades (impacting GPA) will be issued.

**Reports:** You are required to submit a completed “Mid-Point Progress Report” during your CPT period, as well as your submission of materials as specified in your detailed proposal to your CPT Supervisor. At the end of your CPT, you must also turn in a “Final Report.” Please talk with your program coordinator as to where the reports are to be sent, length and formatting of documents, deadline, etc. as each program handles this differently.

**Registration timing:** Masters students must finish at least 6 course units, and meet academic standards before they are allowed to register for any CPT course. Doctoral students must complete all coursework before requesting CPT during the fall or spring semesters. Please note: GSAS does not allow CPT in the student’s final/last semester.

**Tuition and Fees:**

Students who register for CPT will be placed into the the CPT course, GAS 9980. No tuition and fees will be charged for this course.